

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

Claims 1-41: (Canceled)

42. (New) An apparatus comprising:

a replaceable component housed within the apparatus;

an RFID tag attached to the replaceable component, the RFID tag including stored data;

means for using a wireless link within the apparatus to read the data from the RFID tag; and

means for selectively enabling or disabling use of the replaceable component in the apparatus based on the data read from the RFID tag.

43. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 42, wherein the apparatus is a device designed for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

44. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 42, wherein the apparatus is a light source unit for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

45. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 44, wherein the component is a light source within the light source unit.

46. (New) An apparatus comprising:

a replaceable component within the apparatus;

an RFID tag attached to the replaceable component;
means for causing the RFID tag to store data for use in identifying the apparatus;
and
means for using a wireless link within the apparatus to read the data which identifies the apparatus from the RFID tag.

47. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 46, wherein the apparatus is a device designed for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

48. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 46, wherein the apparatus is a light source unit for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

49. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 48, wherein the component is a light source within the light source unit.

50. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 46, wherein the replaceable component is removable from the apparatus and is usable as a component in each of a plurality of substantially identical systems, and wherein the RFID tag further stores data identifying each said system in which the replaceable component has been used as a component.

51. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 46, further comprising means for outputting an indication of the data to an entity external to the apparatus.

52. (New) An apparatus comprising:
a replaceable component housed within the apparatus;

an RFID tag attached to the replaceable component, the RFID tag storing performance data relating to a component of the apparatus other than the replaceable component;

means for using a wireless link within the apparatus to read the performance data from the RFID tag; and

means for outputting an indication of the performance data to an entity external to the apparatus.

53. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 52, wherein the apparatus is a device designed for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

54. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 52, wherein the apparatus is a light source unit for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

55. (New) An apparatus as recited in claim 52, wherein the component is a light source within the light source unit.

56. (New) A light source unit for use in an endoscopic imaging system, the light source unit comprising:

a light source;

a light source housing containing the light source;

an RFID tag attached to the light source housing, the RFID tag including stored data;

an RF transceiver;

an antenna coupled to the RF transceiver and mounted so as to permit wireless communication between the RFID tag and the transceiver; and

a controller to control the RF transceiver to read the data stored in the RFID tag using said wireless communication, and to selectively enable or disable use of the light source unit based on the data stored in the RFID tag.

57. (New) A light source unit for use in an endoscopic imaging system, the light source unit comprising:

a light source which is removable from the light source unit and which is usable in each of a plurality of light source units;

a light source housing containing the light source;

an RFID tag attached to the light source housing, the RFID tag including stored data, including data identifying each light source unit in which the light source has been used;

an RF transceiver;

an antenna coupled to the RF transceiver and mounted so as to permit wireless communication between the RFID tag and the transceiver; and

a controller to control the RF transceiver to update the data stored in the RFID tag to include data which identifies the light source unit.

58. (New) A light source unit as recited in claim 57, wherein the controller is further to control the RF transceiver to read the data stored in the RFID tag using said wireless communication, the light source unit further comprising means for outputting an indication of the data stored in the RFID tag to an entity external to the light source unit.

59. (New) A light source unit for use in an endoscopic imaging system, the light source unit comprising:

a light source;

a light source housing containing the light source;

an RFID tag attached to the light source housing;

an RF transceiver;

an antenna coupled to the RF transceiver and mounted so as to permit wireless communication between the RFID tag and the transceiver; and

a controller to control the RF transceiver to store performance data in the RFID tag using said wireless communication, the performance data relating to performance of a component in the light source unit other than the light source.

60. (New) A light source unit as recited in claim 59, wherein the controller is further to control the RF transceiver to read the performance data from the RFID tag using said wireless communication, the light source unit further comprising means for outputting an indication of the performance data read from the RFID tag to an entity external to the light source unit.

61. (New) A method of operating a device, the method comprising:

operating a removable component within the device; and

using a wireless link within the device to store a password in a memory attached to a removable component within the device.

62. (New) A method as recited in claim 61, wherein the password is for use in controlling operation of, or access to, the device.

63. (New) A method as recited in claim 61, wherein the device is designed for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

64. (New) A method as recited in claim 61, wherein the device is a light source unit for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

65. (New) A method as recited in claim 64, wherein the component is a light source within the light source unit.

66. (New) A method of operating a device, the method comprising:

using a wireless link within the device to read data stored in a memory attached to a removable component within the device; and

using the data read from the memory to selectively enable or disable use of the component within the device.

67. (New) A method as recited in claim 66, wherein the device is designed for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

68. (New) A method as recited in claim 66, wherein the device is a light source unit for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

69. (New) A method as recited in claim 68, wherein the component is a light source within the light source unit.

70. (New) A method of operating a device, the method comprising:

operating a replaceable component within the device; and

using a wireless link within the device to store data for use in identifying the device in a memory attached to the replaceable component, in response to the replaceable component being installed within the device.

71. (New) A method as recited in claim 70, wherein the device is designed for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

72. (New) A method as recited in claim 70, wherein the device is a light source unit for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

73. (New) A method as recited in claim 72, wherein the component is a light source within the light source unit.

74. (New) A method as recited in claim 70, wherein the replaceable component is usable as a component in each of a plurality of similar devices, and wherein the RFID tag includes stored data identifying each device in which the component has been used.

75. (New) A method of operating a device, the method comprising:

operating a replaceable component within the device; and

using a wireless link within the device to store performance data in a memory attached to the replaceable component, the performance data relating to a component of the device other than said replaceable component.

76. (New) A method as recited in claim 75, wherein the device is designed for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

77. (New) A method as recited in claim 75, wherein the device is a light source unit for use in an endoscopic medical procedure.

78. (New) A method as recited in claim 77, wherein the component is a light source within the light source unit.